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# THE PIONEER CHARACTER OF OREGON PROGRESS

SELECTED WRITINGS OF  
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of Portland, Oregon.

## TOPICS.

The Later Character of Oregon a Product of Pioneer Life.  
Habits of Oregon in the Early Time.  
Retrospect and Outlook.  
The Pioneer Spirit, Merits and Demerits.  
The Sluggish Willamette Valley.  
Contrasts, Oregon and Washington.

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## THE CHARACTER OF OREGON A RESULTANT OF PIONEER LIFE.

(From an Address at Astoria April 18, 1901, before the Clatsop County Teachers Institute.)

Oregon, from the circumstances of its settlement and its long isolation, and through natural interaction of the materials slowly brought together, has a character peculiarly its own. In some respects that character is admirable; in others it is open to criticism. Our situation has made for us a little world in which strong traits of character peculiarly our own have been developed; it has also left us somewhat—indeed, too much—out of touch with the world at large. We do not adjust ourselves readily to the conditions that surround us in the world of opinion and action—forces now pressing in upon us, steadily, from all sides.

Under operation of forces that press upon us from contact with the world at large, and under the law of our own internal development, we are moving rapidly away from old conditions. Pioneer life is now but a memory; it will soon be but a legend or tradition. Modern society has no fixity. Nothing abides in present forms. See how complete has been the transformation

of New England within twenty-five years! A similar process is now in rapid movement among ourselves in the Pacific Northwest. Once we had here a little world of our own. We shall have it no more. The horizon that once was bounded by our own board enlarges to the horizon of man.

The story of the toilsome march of the wagon trains over the plains will be received by future generations almost as a legend on the borderland of myth, rather than of veritable history. It will be accepted, indeed, but scarcely understood. Even now, to those who made the journey, the realities of it seem half fabulous. It no longer seems to have been a rational undertaking. The rapid transit of the present time appears almost to relegate the story to the land of fable. No longer can we understand the motives that urged our pioneers toward the indefinite horizon that seemed to verge on the unknown. Mystery was in the movement; mystery surrounded it. It was the last effort of that profound impulse which, from a time far preceding the dawn of history, has pushed the race, to which we belong, to discovery and occupation of Western lands.<sup>1</sup>

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#### HABITS OF OREGON IN THE EARLY TIME.

(*The Jewish Tribune*, December 17, 1909.)

My earliest recollections go back to conditions in the Upper Mississippi Valley. There, three-score years ago, the people were just beginning to emerge from the conditions of pioneer life. The chief agency that affected this change was improved methods of communication. On these all progress depends. People in isolation adapt themselves to their circumstances. They make themselves content with what they are and with what they have. They become very serious, they are tied to a deep religiosity, yet become extremely narrow and provin-

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Scott "crossed the plains" with his father, John Tucker Scott, in 1852, from Peoria, Illinois, at the age of fourteen years. He often spoke of the journey as not a "rational undertaking." His mother and a brother died on the journey and the family was reduced to poverty.

cial. They come to think they "know it all." Oregon got this notion in the days of its long isolation. It has not yet wholly recovered from the notion. Too fond it is still of the crude and restricted ideas that grew up in its early time. Man, centered on himself, always looks with suspicion, usually with disdain, upon the larger outward world.

In the middle of the Upper Mississippi Valley, in the states of Kentucky, Missouri, Indiana and Illinois, the people, at the time my observations began, were just beginning their change from the first pioneer conditions to the more varied life that resulted from growth of population, and from partial subjugation of the original forces of nature to the slow advance of town life.<sup>2</sup> They, through whom the change was effected, mostly came from the older states—from New England and New York. They brought "Yankee" customs into the West. They were mercantile traders or speculators, mostly; at first they were a class apart from the rough pioneers. They didn't like the rough life of the woods or farms, but took up the professions or "kept store." They showed some study and refinement of dress, managed to afford better furniture—though, indeed, it was poor enough—and held their religious meetings quietly, while the pioneers liked the Cumberland Presbyterian revivals or Methodist camp meetings. There was little money. The hospitality of pioneer life caused things to be shared almost in common. In going about, the wayfarer stayed overnight at any house he met and was always welcome. Here and there an Eastern man—a man from the East—had set up a place where he kept travelers overnight, and charged them for the service. Such incidents were the talk of the neighborhood.

When we came to Oregon we found the conditions much changed. In many ways life here, sixty years ago, was more primitive than it was in the early times in Illinois and Missouri. But in others it was far more advanced. The difference was due to our proximity in Oregon to the sea. Naviga-

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<sup>2</sup> Mr. Scott was born near Peoria, Illinois, February 1, 1838.

tion of the sea has always been a main factor in the promotion and growth of civilization.

The early settlement of the Middle West was based wholly on nature. Garments were homespun. There were no nails or glass, and the fewest books. In the earliest settlement of Oregon, down to 1850, it was the same. But the discovery of gold in California started an active movement to our Pacific Coast, not only by land but by sea.<sup>3</sup> We could get the world's commodities here which could not be had, then, or scarcely at all, in the interior of Illinois or Missouri. Before we began to grow wheat in Oregon sufficient to supply our bread, we got flour from Chile; beans from Chile, and sugar from Manila. From Oregon, even in that early day, we could get a view, through commerce, of the wide world. In the first and last analysis all progress of mankind depends upon the sea, for the sea is the medium of universal communication. And, probably, all life on our planet began in the sea.

Native life in this country at the time when the pioneers came was adjusted strictly to the environment. The Indian probably had reached his limit of progress. Without assistance from outside sources, man in America could have got on no further. He had not the means of additional attainment. It was necessary to have help from a world beyond him. Nature had done little for the Western Hemisphere, except in giving fertility to the soil. Here were no animals that could be domesticated and made to do the work which man required. Think what this means. It means that the basis of agricultural life, which is the beginning of all civilization, was denied to primitive man in America. The horse, the ox and cow, the sheep and pig, brought from Europe, were to constitute the basis of pioneer life, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. On the domestic animals we depended absolutely, in the settlement of the Oregon country. We could do nothing without them.

Life here corresponded with the primitive conditions estab-

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<sup>3</sup> This movement began in 1848.

lished by the contact of the new forces, introduced by man, with the forces of nature found here, yet hitherto unused. This contact with primitive nature, experienced by the pioneers, produced an exaltation of the spirits that cannot now be repeated nor imagined. It was a situation in contact with the freshness of nature, wherein being was bliss. It belongs to memory, and never can be realized again.

Unrelated opinions of all sorts grew rank and ran wild in this situation. They were uncorrected by influence of the outer world. It is this fact that made older Oregon what it was, and makes it so difficult to correct or to modify the ideas established then. Through active communication with the larger world, the change is coming now, but still it is extremely difficult to move the Oregon people of the olden time out of their ways of thought and action. There is a solid opposition that may not seem to resist, yet is practically immovable. Hence new methods of industry and culture gain but slowly. Yet they are making sure progress.

The political opinions, social usages and industrial methods of the early time conformed strictly to the conditions that pertained or belonged to such situation. Everything was a spontaneous outgrowth; but nature ruled over all. Social life was free and easy, where there were no classes, and no social gradations. Opinions on religious and social questions were cast in very much the same mould, all about us; and independence of thought and action, on such subjects, was almost unknown. Only on political questions was real difference of opinion asserted. This difference came on the one side from our Northern people; on the other from our Southern settlers. The Kansas-Nebraska struggle in politics was fought in Oregon as in Massachusetts and Missouri—even though we were at a continental distance from the scene of conflict.

Except in the Puget Sound region, the Indians in the Oregon country never were so numerous as they had been in some other parts of our American territory; nor were they at all an agricultural class. They lived on game and fish and the wild

fruits of the country; and, for such a life, Puget Sound was the Indian's true paradise. As a rule, too, they were less ferocious there, and less troublesome to the whites, than in other Pacific Coast regions. Yet there was one fierce Indian outbreak at Puget Sound.<sup>4</sup> Contact with the whites, in various parts of the Oregon country, which had begun with the Lewis and Clark expedition, introduced conditions which, within a few years, began the decimation of the Indian tribes. It is believed that two-thirds of the Indians had perished before 1852, and, soon after that, only a small moiety of the entire race remained. Intermixture of the whites with the Indians was not favorable to either race; and, with few exceptions, the vitality of the mixed offspring was low. Yet there are persons among us in whose veins runs Indian blood who have sound physical constitutions and excellent moral fiber; and Indian blood exists in individuals in whom it would not be noticed at all.

The social customs of the pioneer of Oregon were those mainly of the states from which they came, modified, however, by conditions and peculiarities that spring up in every new country. Change of situation always has upon a people an effect of this kind. People who came to Oregon did not do things in just the same ways they had been accustomed to do them in their former seats; and the change often caused closest friends who had come to the country together to draw apart. It is one of the phenomena of the ascendancy of nature over man. Change of feeling and of disposition had been effected by so radical a change of situation.

In early Oregon there was no land speculation, as there had been in the states of the Mississippi Valley. Doubtless it was prevented by the donation land laws, which made ample provision for every settler, yet required him to live on the land four years, by which time each one had become attached to the soil and did not wish to sell. Again, the future value of land was scarcely foreseen then; the value of timber, not at all.

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<sup>4</sup> This was the Indian war of 1855-56. In the Rogue River country Indians gave trouble during several years previously.

It was indeed well understood that there were great natural resources here; but the demand for consumption of them, or the modern market, was unknown. Many towns were founded, but it was scarcely expected that any one of them would become a great city. The effect of this impression is seen today in the manner in which Portland is laid out. It is a village plan, rather than a city plan. The small block was intended for a single house and its vegetable garden.<sup>5</sup>

The wealth lying in woods and fisheries passed unnoticed; but, after the discovery of gold in California, demand for lumber there created some traffic between San Francisco and the Columbia River and Puget Sound. The sawmills, however, were of the most primitive description, and their output was extremely small. Squared timber was prepared with the axe. Very small vessels sufficed for the trade, and their north-bound cargoes consisted of provisions and the ordinary goods required in pioneer life. Some wheat was grown in the Oregon country at an early day, but not nearly enough for the demand that ensued after rapid settlement began. Five dollars a bushel was no unusual price for wheat, and pork in the barrel, shipped round Cape Horn, was a great price. Money, after 1850, when California gold began to appear, was comparatively abundant, as may be inferred from the prices of commodities. Oregon set up a mint of its own,<sup>6</sup> but pieces stamped by private firms, in California, was a long time the principal money supply. Gold dust was, however, often weighed out for payments. In some localities this, indeed, lasted many years. The treasure of gold found in California stimulated the search for supply in Oregon, which, in various localities, was rewarded largely. During many years the country produced little for sale but gold; and it is an economic law that this product alone is never a source of permanent wealth to the country that yields it. It is spent for consump-

<sup>5</sup> The blocks are 200 by 200 feet, with an area of nearly an acre.

<sup>6</sup> The Oregon mint was owned by a partnership consisting of W. K. Kilborne, Theophilus Magruder, James Taylor, George Abernethy, W. H. Willson, W. H. Rector, J. G. Campbell and Noyes Smith. The coins of the company, made in 1849, were called "Beaver" money.

tion; and exhaustion of the mines leaves the producing country no richer, or but little richer, than if the gold had remained in the beds where nature had placed it.

The Indian missionary work of the early time terminated in failure of the purposes for which it was intended, but it bore fruit of inestimable value, through its conversion into educational and religious work among the white inhabitants, rapidly increasing in members. Our first schools were thus founded, long time antedating the beginning of our public educational system. The original missionary enterprises, moreover, were among the main influences that settled the Oregon Question in favor of the United States.<sup>7</sup> That we saved so much of our claim as we did was due largely to the early missionary effort, which, though defeated in its first purpose and endeavor, sowed for a harvest of a far more valuable kind.

Soon after the settlement began the mercantile class became active here; for the mercantile class also was an important factor. Indeed, the mercantile class came early, for trade with the natives—the Astor people first, then Wyeth, and the Hudson's Bay Company as more permanent traders. When the American settlement began, the chances of profit in trade opened opportunity to all who noted them and could take advantage of them. Foundation of not a few fortunes and families were laid thus—which continue to this present day, and undoubtedly will have much longer continuance. The Jewish mercantile spirit, ever alert for new opportunity, appeared in Oregon at an early time. It was active in every town. At Portland, Vancouver, Olympia, Lafayette, Salem, Roseburg, Oregon City, it pushed to the front. From the general mercantile class it was more distinct than it is now. That was because of the agricultural pioneer, who lived on the lap of nature, did not understand at the time the higher civilization, represented then by the mercantile class. *The Oregonian*

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<sup>7</sup> In 1846.

then was full of sneers about the Jews.<sup>8</sup> The whole mercantile class, indeed, was regarded with suspicion, with distrust, and with consequent dislike, by the provincial pioneer mind. It is described with accuracy by Mr. Roosevelt in one of his volumes on the settlement of the West in these words, viz.:

"The pioneer in his constant struggle with poverty was prone to look with puzzled anger at those who made more money than he did, and whose lives were easier. The backwoods farmer or planter of that day looked upon the merchant with the same suspicion now felt by his successor for the banker or the railroad magnate. He did not quite understand how it was that the merchant who seemed to work less hard than he did should make money; and, being ignorant and suspicious, he usually followed some hopelessly wrong-headed course when he tried to remedy his wrongs."<sup>9</sup>

Some pictures have long-lasting colors. Here and there men then engaged in mercantile business, who had no knowledge whatever of the requirements of the business. They sold their land and engaged in trade, supposing they might compete with and triumph over others to whom knowledge of the business had come through experience, or as an hereditary possession. They failed, of course. They knew nothing about the laws of trade, of buying and selling, of credit among the farmers or of credit at bank. But they thought they could imitate the "store keeper," and this was the height of their purpose or ambition. It was an exceedingly primitive state however, might be indefinitely extended; but this would not of society that could produce examples of this kind.

But perhaps I have written enough in this line. The essay, be the time or place. I have simply responded to a request for an article made by *The Jewish Tribune*. All of us together have made this country; and it is not what any single group of us would have made it, nor what any single group of us could have expected it would be. The greatest of the changes, probably, are still to come.

<sup>8</sup> For narrative of Jewish pioneers in the Pacific Northwest, see *The Oregonian*, December 3, 1903, p. 10.

<sup>9</sup> See Theodore Roosevelt's *The Winning of the West*, vol. iv., p. 244.

## RETROSPECT AND OUTLOOK.

(From an address at the eleventh annual banquet of the Portland Commercial Club, January 29, 1905.)

We can best understand where we are by some retrospect of what we have been. This is the fifty-third year of my residence in Oregon. Portland, when I first saw it, numbered perhaps eight hundred inhabitants, and was much the largest town in the Oregon country.<sup>10</sup> Outside the Willamette Valley there were very few settlers—a few hundred in Southern Oregon and a few hundred at Puget Sound. To one who has not actual recollection of the condition of that period, it is next to impossible to form a conception of the narrowness of conditions, of the slowness and difficulty of communication. And, indeed, for a good many years afterwards it was no better. It would have been pertinent, perhaps, had I told the railroad men last night<sup>11</sup> how we used to travel on foot all over this country for hundreds of miles, invariably carrying a blanket for the night's sleep, but usually taking chances on the obtaining of food. My father made our first settlement at Puget sound.<sup>12</sup> Communication between the Columbia River and Puget Sound was by the Cowlitz trail, over which we trudged, waded and swam many a time. Between Rainier and Olympia I have consumed three weeks, all the time making utmost efforts to get on. In the Fall of 1856 I had occasion to return to Oregon, and, on the last day of September of that year, set out on foot from Olympia to Portland.<sup>13</sup> I was just one week on the journey, and I think I was the only passenger that week on the trail. Of course, "slept out" o' nights.

This reminiscence is merely personal. Now let me give an historical example: At the beginning of the year 1859 I was at Oregon City grubbing for roots under a tutor, so I might

<sup>10</sup> In 1852.

<sup>11</sup> Railroad traffic men conferred with Portland jobbing merchants, and Mr. Scott spoke at the dinner given for them, by the Portland Chamber of Commerce, January 28, 1905.

<sup>12</sup> John Tucker Scott settled on Scott's Prairie, near Shelton, in 1854.

<sup>13</sup> Mr. Scott, then eighteen years of age, returned from Puget Sound in 1856, to attend school at Forest Grove and Oregon City.

read Horace and Homer, and supporting myself by chopping cordwood.<sup>14</sup> The act that made Oregon a state had been passed by Congress in the month of February in that year. But it was more than a month before we could know of it, and, when known, it excited little interest or attention. The news came to this coast by way of the overland stage from Saint Louis, and by steamer from San Francisco to Portland. That steamer arrived at Portland one afternoon late in the month of March.<sup>15</sup> At Oregon City the news that Oregon was a state did not arrive until nearly noon the next day. A few persons talked about it with a languid interest, and wondered when the government of the state would be set in operation. Perhaps it would be another week before it would be known at the capital (Salem) that Oregon was now a sovereign state, and the pioneer Governor-elect, John Whiteaker, might not hear of it at his farm in Lane County for a month to come. An announcement, that now would be instantly made at every telegraph station and would call forth the boom of guns and the peal of bells, passed almost unnoticed. But it occurred to a young man at Oregon City, named Stephen Senter, that there were persons at Salem who might wish to have the news, so he mounted a horse and started as messenger. At that time of the year it was not easy to ride. Molalla and Pudding rivers were to be crossed, both were out over the banks, and, needless to say, the mud was at its worst. But this courier and herald of the state persevered, and, after an effort of thirty hours, reached Salem with the news. Naturally, the announcement was received with more interest at the capital than elsewhere, for it meant that the state government would supersede the territorial; but the people at large evinced little or no interest in it, and a letter from Salem, printed in *The Oregonian*, then a weekly paper, some ten days later, said the state arrived there on horseback last Wednesday afternoon, and that was all.

But it should not be inferred, from the simplicity of our

<sup>14</sup> Mr. Scott borrowed an ax for this work from Tom Charman, whom he repaid by chopping cordwood.

<sup>15</sup> The steamer Brother Jonathan arrived at Portland March 15, 1859. The overland stage left Saint Louis February 14 and arrived at San Francisco March 10.

manners of that time, that the constitution which had been made for our state was an immature work. It was a product of preceding experience in government, adapted to our times and conditions. So ripe was it, so complete, that it has answered our purposes ever since. Permanent principles are fixed in it. It contains little that could be called temporary, and that little passes almost unnoticed, for what is unnecessary in constitutions and laws quickly becomes obsolete.

Yet life had its special attractions. We were content with little, and were not poor, because we had few wants. We were, I think, more cordial and hearty toward each other; for intense devotion to our various pursuits had not then thrown all the energies of each into a single channel, and so to an extent separated us from each other, as now. True, we had to work to live, but each one felt that we had a little time for the intercourse of social life. There is not much of that sort of leisure now. Yet there might better be. Nature requires us to work, but has ways of punishing excesses in that direction, too. If she does it in no other way, she makes success itself useless, for her wreath often covers hair that has grown gray, and fame comes when the hearts it should have thrilled are numb. The greatest of all moral writers has said: "They lose it that do buy it with much care."

Many are yet living who have seen the wool that made the family clothing carded and spun in the house; who have seen the spinning wheel and the loom, indispensable portions of the domestic plant, occupying a large part of the space in a small cabin; who have seen the dye pots standing in the chimney corners at the open fire where the meals of the family were cooked; who have been members of households where every part of the work about house and farm was done in a particular way with clocklike regularity—the management of crops, the care of animals, the making of soap, the curing of meats, and attention to all the arts and duties of independent family life. Scarcely anything was bought; each family supplied its

own wants, and, though there was plenty of a kind, it surprises us now to think how few things were necessary.

Out of this mode of life we have passed, because we could not remain in it. New conditions have grown up around us, to which of necessity we conform. Society is in a perpetual flux, and though we look back to the past for instruction, we accept the present without regret, and look forward to the future with an eager but undefined expectation. We talk of successive generations of men, but, looking at society in a mass, the generations do not come and go. One unites with another, and there is no line of separation. But the whole living organism, to which we belong, is carried forward by impulses that lie within the laws of its own existence. The changes are assumed only by degrees, and not with abruptness; they come as a cumulative effect, yet that effect cannot abide or remain in any state of fixity, but must pass on.

Familiar as I am and, during a long period, have been, with the growth and progress of the Oregon country, and, indeed, of all our Pacific Coast states, I am yet, upon review of this growth and progress, astonished at what has been accomplished, within the period of my own observation. We who observed the slowness of the growth, during a long period of time, could not imagine we should live to see what we have seen; and yet all that heretofore has been accomplished is as nothing to the prospect that opens before us. Industry and production are the factors of our material progress, in peace, as iron and gold are the two main nerves of war. Industry, operating on the resources of nature, in a country so favored as ours, will do all things. *Labor omnia vincit* remains as true as in the olden time, and truer; for man now is able to make the forces of nature serve him in innumerable ways formerly unknown.

Our states of the Pacific Coast are linked together in a common interest. Together they have risen; together they still will rise and grow. Forces within them and without them, whether similar or common, or not, all work toward the same

end. Industry, production and commerce are at work with more than the hundred hands of Briareus.

Note our situation on the Pacific seaboard. Note also that the changes of recent times have virtually made the Pacific an American sea. The active theatre of the world's new effort is now in Asia and Western America. The two hemispheres, heretofore in communication only across the Atlantic, are now rapidly developing an intercourse over the Pacific. Many steamships, and an increasing number, on regular lines, now sail between our Pacific ports and the ports of the Orient, and, of "tramp" steamers and sailing vessels, a large and continually growing fleet. Pressure of Russia and of other nations upon China and Japan is creating a prodigious activity, and is sure to result in vast transformations there. England, France and Germany have their spheres of active influence in that same enormous field. We are in touch, then, with a movement that includes more than one-half the human race. We are in the Philippine Islands ourselves, an incomparable station for observation and commerce. Participation in the results that are to come from the transformation of the Orient will be had through the ports of our Pacific states—the way stations en route to lands across the Pacific.

Of this mighty development now just beginning to appear, our country should take all proper advantage. It means a commerce on the Pacific which will rival that of the Atlantic. It means mighty industrial and commercial progress for our states of the western side of the continent. Where now are four millions of people there may be fifty million by the close of this century, with every kind of intellectual and moral development comparable with the material prosperity.

From review of the past and observation of the present, we may see the promise of the future. Like the old Welsh bard, with all the past impressed upon his soul and looking down the historical vista to a wonderful future, one may echo the exclamation:

"Visions of glory, spare my aching sight;  
Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul!"

THE PIONEER SPIRIT.  
(*The Oregonian*, April 23, 1899.)

The charge against the pioneer spirit, of which a good deal has been heard lately, is that it is an influence unfavorable to a highly organized and coöperative industrial development. This theory is based upon the extreme individualism of pioneer life—its lack of coöperative dependence, its freedom from systematic labors and its perfect personal liberty. The demonstration of it, we think, is found in the tardiness of the Willamette Valley in the matter of industrial progress. Other countries, less favorably situated for agricultural and other forms of organized industry, take on new ways and get ahead rapidly in population and wealth, while the Willamette Valley moves along in the old grooves, being today in essentials largely what it was thirty years ago, namely, a pioneer country. Those who have imagined that, in noting this condition and in setting forth the reasons for it as above, *The Oregonian* is broadly condemning the valley population and indulging a wicked venom of malice and contempt, but poorly conceive either facts or motives. In its whole spirit and character *The Oregonian* is, itself, of the pioneer world. Its roots lie deep in the pioneer life. In these facts, perhaps, and in the understanding and sympathy which they imply, lie the secret of its continued acceptance and support by a people not at all times in accord with its judgments.

It cannot, we think, be denied that the pioneer spirit makes a slow country in a material sense; but there are other interests in community life far above increase of commodities and multiplication of towns; and it is in its relation to these higher interests that the pioneer spirit is seen in its best character. If it be asked what has the pioneer spirit done for Oregon, it is only necessary to point to the conditions which differentiate Oregon from the other Pacific states. At the very threshold of our organic social life, while the criminal element and the vigilance committee in turn controlled the affairs of neighboring communities, there was created for Oregon, by the

morality, the intelligence and the force of its pioneer population, a provisional system embodying everything which modern statecraft deems essential to the welfare of the people.<sup>16</sup> Framed with small ceremony by frontiersmen in buckskin breeches to meet the necessities of a handful of people in a wilderness, it was made to accord with the conclusions of the most advanced political science. For public and private rights it afforded complete protection. It met every want of the time; it suppressed not alone crime, but, in large measure, vice as well; while the cost of administration was relatively a mere fraction of what states commonly pay for worse service. If the capacity for wise self-government be in truth, as it is declared to be, the highest virtue of a people, multiplied honors are due to the pioneer spirit which created and accepted the provisional system of government—a system related, as the parent is related to the child, to the state government which continues to serve our needs.

The social and moral coördination which is so notable of Oregon life—especially notable when Oregon is contrasted with neighboring communities—is a direct achievement of the pioneer spirit. The sympathy which makes of Western Oregon a homogeneous community; the mutual understanding which checks the energies of social disorder before it rises to the degree of social menace; the friendliness of one “old Oregonian” for another; the respect for leadership which has continuously recognized and supported certain men of large talents in quasi-public relationships—these qualities have their foundation in the pioneer spirit. It is, too, the pioneer spirit that makes the fine social austerity which so pervades the moral atmosphere. It frowns upon a sensational and unclean press; it banishes gambling, even in its minor forms, from respectable circles; it knows not the lottery ticket; it ostracizes the trade in liquors and all who have to do with it. Of course, all this is provincial; that is undeniable; but a provincialism which has saved Oregon from public extravagance, which has built

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<sup>16</sup> The provisional government of Oregon was created at Champoege May 2, 1843.

up its commercial credit, which has protected against the domination of the socialistic political demagogue and the machinations of the professional boomer, which has made education universal, which has conserved the good offices of religion and which has promoted the higher interests of civilization—such a provincialism is a saving salt which any community may thank God for. Oregon has it, and it is to the pioneer spirit that Oregon owes it.

Oregon is curiously faithful to those who redeemed it from the wilderness. Since 1856 the population of the state has multiplied five-fold. Every country and every race have contributed to the expansion; but the forces which started with the earlier years have continued to dominate. Habits planted at the beginning still rule the land. A thousand influences have intruded themselves, but they have bent to the conditions which existed before them. We have now at the end of the century a very different Oregon from the Oregon of the "fifties"; but it has been wrought out by evolution, not by revolution. The Oregon of today is the true child of the earlier Oregon, with the family likeness strong, with the family traits predominating. The pioneer makes, now as ever, the spirit of the country. Others have prospered, in a material sense, more largely than the pioneer. But from him have come, broadly speaking, the lawgivers, the teachers and the preachers of the country. This is the pioneer's land, and his spirit rules it. And the land might be far worse.

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#### THE SLUGGISH WILLAMETTE VALLEY. (*The Oregonian*, March 25, 1899.)

The only immediate hope of such a wake-up and shake-up of the Willamette Valley as will stir its latent forces and bring the country into line with modern industrial life and spirit, lies in the possibility of effort from the outside. The valley will do little for itself. The power of adaptation to new ways

and new uses lies not within the present population. If the successors of the pioneer had his push and hardihood something might be expected from them; but they have only his stubborn bias toward an intense individualism. They decline the enterprise that calls for coöperative effort, and will not yield to the steady grind of systematic industry. They are not a lazy people, for they are capable of prodigies of energy when it suits their mood; but they are an undisciplined people. The country stagnates in their hands because they will not do the things essential to its thrift and progress. This is not said in the spirit of fault-finding. *The Oregonian* is not among those who sneer at the pioneer spirit. It thinks it knows the Willamette people as well and possibly better than they know themselves; and it dares say without mincing words what it conceives to be the truth in explanation of why the country does not attract new population, and why it lags in the general movement of industrial progress.

There is land to be had in the Willamette Valley in great bodies and at small price. It would be worth the while of the Southern Pacific Railroad, since it has a great invested stake in the valley, to buy up a whole district and repeople it with a view to an experiment in industrial regeneration. It would be interesting and, we believe, vastly profitable, if there could be set in the heart of this dormant country a community of strictly modern farmers, large enough to organize the industries and to maintain the coöperative spirit of systematic agriculture. Such a community would be very useful to the country as an object lesson; and of especial service in assisting the organization of other and similar communities. We know of no better locality for such an effort than that of Southern Yamhill and Northern Polk, named in a recent writing in these columns, where a syndicate operator finds that 40,000 acres of choice and improved farm lands can be bought for a price averaging less than twenty dollars an acre.

Exploitation is what the Willamette Valley needs. It lacks no gift of nature fitting it for the home of thrift and fortune.

But with all its great endowment it has made less progress in recent years than any district of even relative importance in the Northwest. "Your Willamette Valley," remarked an Eastern railway traffic expert recently to an *Oregonian* writer, "is the puzzle of the railway world. It yields less traffic than any similar territory in the United States, less than that of any other community of equal numbers." It ought to be worth an effort on the part of those who have large capital bound up in the country to bring about a better order of things.

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#### CONTRASTS, OREGON AND WASHINGTON.

(*The Oregonian*, September 3, 1901.)

There is no doubt that, during several years, population, business, industry and wealth in the State of Washington have been growing faster than in the State of Oregon; and there is no mystery why.

Oregon, by comparison, is old. Washington is new. A great proportion of the population of Oregon was born in Oregon. A small proportion of the population of Washington was born in Washington.

What is the result of these simple facts? The bulk of Washington's population came recently from the East. The bulk of Oregon's population came here in early times, or was born here. Coming recently from the East, the population of Washington has retained its touch with the East. Every newcomer into Washington left friends behind him who took interest in him, who was anxious for his welfare, to whom he wrote accounts of the country, to whom he sent Washington newspapers. Persons who came to Washington wrote back to their "home paper," giving an account of the country, always a glowing one. They were anxious, of course, to justify themselves for their removal to the new state. Parents who had sent their sons out to Washington were glad to hear from them and glad to tell neighbors how fortunate the venture had

been. All this together made a force that beats all the immigration efforts than can possibly be organized at this end of the line. Washington, therefore, received, and receives, population.

But how was it and how is it in Oregon? The old settlers had been separated so long from their Eastern friends that they had been totally forgotten. They had ceased, long since, to "write home." Years and years ago the early settlers had sent letters to their "home paper," giving accounts of the country; but long since they had ceased to do it. Long isolation had almost completely cut Oregon off from intercourse with the Eastern States.

When the new development began, Washington was comparatively new. Two great railroads were built into the state, across the continent, and proclaimed the discovery of a new country. People began to rush in. They found the country unoccupied; they settled down and wrote for their friends. People came out with a rush—people who had seen the recent development in Eastern states, and who knew how to do things. They knew how to take hold of the new resources, to go into the lumber business, to hunt for coal and to apply new methods of agriculture. But to a great part of the people of Oregon, long settled here, the methods of these new movements were all unknown.

The people of early Oregon had come out of the pioneer conditions in the then pioneer states of the Mississippi Valley, had been forgotten by their old friends there, forgotten even by their own relatives, had not kept up with the new development, and indeed had no means of doing so. On the other hand, in Washington a new people had come, out of the newer development of the Eastern States, in new and quick touch with the people from whence they came. Every newcomer into Washington was therefore an active and enthusiastic immigration agent. But in Oregon, where most of the desirable places for settlement had long been taken, there were not so many first-rate opportunities; the railroads were less

energetic than those of Washington—indeed could not be so energetic.

In the circumstances, the new population could settle in Washington, hitherto unoccupied, with more advantage; and every one who settled there wrote to his friends to come on, and wrote to the paper at his old home a glowing account of the situation. Then, after a while, followed the marvelous tales of gold discovery in Alaska and British Northwest territory. This set an immense tide of movement through the State of Washington and ports of Puget Sound, since the shortest route lay that way. Immigration and trade were enormously developed through these movements, of whose benefits the State of Washington was so fortunately situated as to receive the largest share. These are the facts that account for the more rapid recent growth of the State of Washington, as compared with the State of Oregon.

*The Oregonian* has thought proper to set forth these things with its customary plainness. It is the misfortune of Oregon that it has some stupid people who, without this plain presentation, are unable to understand them. Some even blame *The Oregonian* for a general condition, which, of course, it has been unable to change or control. It has worked, however, at all times to the utmost of its power, and it believes that it may without immodesty say that its voice has ever been the main factor, as it today is the main factor, in keeping the name of Oregon before the world.

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(*The Oregonian*, June 16, 1909.)

The remarkable sea basin of Western Washington, the great estuary of Puget Sound, was of slight importance in the early time. Agriculture, cattle, grazing, were all in all. The valleys of Western Oregon from the Columbia River to the Siskiyou Mountains furnished these opportunities. The poor grazing and the poor agricultural possibilities of the

Puget Sound country left that region, in the days of the pioneers, far behind. All the lands, or nearly all, in the Puget Sound basin, that possessed fertility, were covered with heavy **growths of timber**. The labor and expense of bringing these lands into cultivation was and is immense. The valleys of Western Oregon, south of the Columbia River, between the Cascade and Coast ranges of mountains, had large areas of open plains. In them the settlement naturally began.

But after a while—it was long years—the idea of transcontinental railroads got into action. First, for California; and San Francisco was the center of everything for the Pacific Coast.<sup>17</sup> Later, for the Oregon country;<sup>18</sup> and connection in the north from the east with the open ocean, by the easiest way for shipping, carried the thoughts of men to Puget Sound. The transcontinental railroads, on Northern routes, sought that connection with the open ocean.<sup>19</sup> Conditions of pioneer life were superseded by the new movement; and the greater energy, that formerly had been exerted upon the line of pioneer effort—whose basis was agriculture and cattle—shifted gradually to the north, where commerce was the leading idea. Railroads were rushed across the country, on northern lines. Our connection in Oregon and at Portland, with California, was earlier, but it left us in subordinate position. It was at a later time that we got the Oregon Short Line and the direct connection with Eastern cities and states.

The phenomenon has simply been the transformation from one basis of life to another—from the agricultural life, which was simplicity, to the more highly specialized and developed life—the product of human evolution, which has no stopping place. It must be admitted that Oregon, founded on old conditions and established on old ideals, has been behind hitherto in this movement. It was a necessary consequence of the conditions. Naturally, therefore, it has been hard to move the

<sup>17</sup> The transcontinental railroad to San Francisco was opened in 1869.

<sup>18</sup> The railroad between Portland and Sacramento was opened in 1887; Union Pacific railroad connections, with Portland, in 1884.

<sup>19</sup> The Northern Pacific transcontinental line to Puget Sound was opened in 1887; the Great Northern, in 1893.

people of Western Oregon. They were established on the primitive or pioneer basis. But long ago the primitive people of Western Washington were overrun, submerged, drowned by the incoming flood. Frank Henry's "Old Pioneer" remains a literary monument over the grave of the early settler there.

Two things have pushed the State of Washington ahead of the State of Oregon. First, the rush of the railroads to reach Puget Sound. Second, the transformation from pioneer and agricultural conditions to commercial conditions, the more rapid submergence of the early settler in Washington than in Oregon, and the outburst of Alaska. The inundation in Washington thus far, therefore, has been more rapid and complete. Yet doubtless we still have people in Oregon who regret even the slow change here. But the movement is inexorable. Our push clubs have its impulse; the Rose Fair at Portland is a manifestation of it; the eagerness of increasing numbers of our people to get into the current instead of drifting about in the eddy attests it. Oregon, too, therefore, presses forward to the mark of its high calling, forgetting the things which are behind! Not forgetting them, either, for that is not necessary. But the new and oncoming generations must set their faces towards the morning. The old existence was idyllic, indeed, and may be remembered as ideal; but no state or stage of life, especially in a new country, is fixed and permanent; nor ought it to be. Yet the old principles of industry and of prudence never with safety can be abandoned.

Oregon now is feeling the rush of new tides of life. There has been progress always, indeed, but the current at times has been checked; even at times there has seemed to be almost a reflux movement. Prudence sometimes outdoes itself on one side, as ambition often overleaps itself on the other. But it is apparent that Oregon is making greater progress in these ten years than in any other two decades of its history. The significance of this fact is apparent, and, moreover, it is presageful. Still, there is one fact: Till Oregon obtains the railroad development that Washington has, our state will

not be able to attain to a degree of similar or comparative progress. The natural resources of Oregon are not inferior; yet the census of next year will show not much more than 600,000 inhabitants in Oregon to nearly 1,000,000 in Washington.<sup>20</sup>

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(*The Oregonian*, May 31, 1908.)

It was natural and necessary that Western Oregon should have been the first part of the Oregon country to attract settlers. The Willamette Valley was a paradise for pioneers. Nature had endowed it with every possible attraction. Moreover, through the rivers, it was accessible from the sea. The first settlers were agriculturists, and the valley of Willamette opened to them finer opportunities than elsewhere in the region of Oregon. California was still Mexican territory. The Puget Sound country, though accessible from the sea, was not accessible from the land, and the pioneers, making their way across the continent, were unable to reach it. The early immigrants could not remain in the interior region, in the upper valley of the Columbia, for communication with the sea was necessary, and the Indians of the interior were more inclined to hostility.

The immigrants, therefore, spread over the Willamette and other valleys of Western Oregon, and later passed into the Puget Sound country from the Columbia, by way of the Cowlitz. Expulsion of the missionaries from the upper valley of the Columbia by hostile Indians left that great region without settlement for many years; till finally discoveries of gold took a white population there and slowly gave it permanent establishment. Military posts protected the people, and, after the railroad came, the population grew rapidly and towns and cities appeared. Extension of railroads across the mountains to Puget Sound led to quick and enormous development of the country about that great estuary, and to creation of ports of commerce there. But Western Oregon, the seat of the orig-

inal settlement, has made slow progress. Portland is its one large town. Development of the coast region of Oregon has lagged from want of roads and railroads, and, for the like reason, the ports of the coast region have been neglected. Progress, indeed, all the time has been made by Western Oregon, but it has been slower than might have been supposed; while Eastern Oregon yet contains an immense region that scarcely has been more than visited by explorers, or at best partly occupied by herdsmen.

There is a difference between Eastern Oregon and Eastern Washington, much in favor of the latter. The elevation of Eastern Washington is much less; it is better watered; the Columbia River traverses the whole breadth of it, and, with its tributaries, has cut down the general level of the country below that of Eastern Oregon. Again, the great railroad systems, terminating at Puget Sound, have covered Eastern Washington with a network of lines and branches; while in Eastern Oregon there has been no railroad to compare with it. These facts explain why Eastern Oregon has fallen in its development far behind Eastern Washington. In Western Washington there is little agriculture compared with that of Western Oregon, but exploitation of the resources of timber and coal have been much greater; and Puget Sound has the bulk of the Alaskan trade. By the census of 1900, the population of Oregon was 413,536; that of Washington was 518,103. The difference, then, in favor of Washington was 104,567. It will probably exceed 200,000 by 1910.<sup>21</sup> Washington first appeared in the census of 1860, with a population of 11,594. Oregon, which had become a state in 1859, had, in 1860, 52,465. Washington first passed Oregon in 1890; its population then was 349,390, while that of Oregon was 313,767.

From 1870 to 1880, the growth of population in Oregon was 93,865; from 1880 to 1890, 138,999; from 1890 to 1900, 99,769. The increase during the present decade may be esti-

<sup>20</sup> The census of 1910 was: Oregon, 672,765; Washington, 1,141,990.

<sup>21</sup> By the census of 1910, Washington population exceeded that of Oregon by 469,225.

mated conservatively at 200,000. It would be more if activity in railroad construction should be renewed within a year. Settlers will not go into isolated parts without the railroad or prospect of it. Our coast counties, which have resources for support of half a million people, are yet almost unoccupied; and, though Eastern Oregon contains much land yet classed as desert, great tracts will surely be reclaimed, as soon as possibility of transportation shall make it worth while to do it. Formerly, development preceded the railroad. But that day is past. Few now will live in places remote from the movements of life and business.

The timber of Oregon is still almost untouched, and, within a few years, will become the basis of an immense activity; while a large part of the timber of Washington is gone already. Oregon, therefore, has an industry coming which in Washington within a few years will be practically exhausted. There is a probability that, within a period not exceeding twenty-five years, the population of Oregon may again exceed that of Washington, since relatively in this state so little has been done upon the resources which nature has offered to industry and enterprise.